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Decree shows Chavez still rules Venezuela: minister

BOGOTA (AFP) - Venezuela's newly appointed Foreign Minister Elias Jaua said Thursday the decree that installed him in office is proof that ailing President Hugo Chavez still rules the country despite being absent.

Jaua was named in Venezuela's official government gazette in a decree signed by Chavez, who remains gravely ill in a Havana hospital some five weeks after complications arose during his fourth round of cancer surgery.

"If I am the foreign minister, it is because President

Chavez is governing and making decisions," Jaua told a Colombian radio station.

The decree was heavily criticized by Venezuela's opposition on Wednesday, who cited its publication as a further reason to demand the president clarify how sick he is and what he can and cannot do.

The decree -- number 9,351 -- was marked Caracas and carries the signature of Chavez, who underwent a fourth cancer operation on December 11 in Cuba. He has not been seen in public since and is convalescing on the communist island.

The government has been releasing only minimal information on the condition of the 58-year-old former paratrooper, who first came to power in 1999 and won a third term in elections in October.

He could not attend his scheduled inauguration on January 10 and it has been postponed indefinitely.

Many in Venezuela find it hard to believe that Chavez - a flamboyant and near constant fixture on television and radio -- would not address the nation in some way if he were able to do so.

A new tourism industry record for Aruba: 5 cruise ships and more than 13 thousand passengers in a single day



Yesterday, Aruba saw no less than 5 cruise ship moored at our harbor in Oranjestad.

Aruba Minister of Tourism, Transport and Labor, Otmar Oduber, was proud to note Aruba welcomed 13 thousand passengers who were on board the ships.

Aruba is known for its fine service and receives several visits by cruise ships of prestigious companies on a regular basis. It is also popular with the cruise lines because it is well south of "hurricane belt."

Last year, several cruise ship companies positioned Aruba among the top 5 tourist destinations. This was

largely due to our tourism executives visiting various cruise lines abroad two years ago, working towards the goal that 2013 will be a very positive year for Aruba in this sector.

Minister Oduber expressed he is very pleased with a cruise tourism increase of 20% in 2013. In the past, Aruba, during its best season, welcomed 600 thousand cruise passengers; this year projections show an expected increase 700 thousand. This is an historic accomplishment, particularly

for all those on the island who benefit from cruise

tourism.

(Photo by Orlando Florez)



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Census Bureau offering brand new service!



As of January 17, the Aruba Census Bureau will be offering her clients a brand new service. The new service is the possibility for making an appointment for the renovation or application of their passport. The service of an appointment for the renovation of a passport or for the application of a new passport will be available at the **former RBTT Bank building on the L.G. Smith Blvd.66.**

The customary service of passport renewals or issuance of new passports by pulling a number will continue as usual at the main Bureau of Civil Registry and Census in the Schoolstraat 2.

This service will be in addition to the usual service at the main Census building. To make an appointment, clients can call 583-8181 from Monday to Friday between 9:00 to 11:00 in the morning, or in the afternoon from 1:30 to 3:00pm. Appointments can also be made via email at: cita@censo.aw.

The only day that appointments cannot be set for is Wednesday afternoons.

The general requirements for the renovation or application of a passport are: a recently taken passport photo, Afls.115 for a national passport, or Afls.145 for a business passport, submission of the expired or

passport to be renewed. If the expired passport is not available, for example, because it was stolen or lost, the client must submit a Police declaration to that effect before the petition is made. In such case there is an additional cost of Afls.150.

A passport petition or renewal for a minor or person under the custody of another, only the legal parents or guardian can make the petition. In the event of a custody, proof of custody by decision of a Judge must be submitted.

In the event that the passport to expire contains an unexpired visa, the passport holder must notify the officer in advance of beginning the process for the renewal in order to avoid destroying the visa unnecessarily. All requests or passport petitions require that the person in question be physically present. Those who will choose the appointment service are urged to be on time for the appointment and to bring all the required documents with them so that the process can be conducted smoothly and quickly.

The petition for the renovation or application of passports via appointments is one of the many projects to help improve the services of the Bureau of Civil Registry and Census to her clients.

Aruban poet Roberto Croes contributes a stirring recital to the re-opening of Aruba National Library



Roberto Croes recites his poem: 'A Book'

Last Sunday, during the re-opening of the Aruba National Library, Mr. Roberto Croes recited the poem "Unbuki" - "A Book", which he wrote especially for the inauguration.

Roberto Croes works at the Department of Finance. One of his passions is to write in Papiamentu. His first publication is called "Sentimento" - "Feelings", a poetry collection presented on International Mother Language Day in February 21,

2011. International Mother Language Day is an observance held annually on 21 February worldwide to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.

The presentation of "Sentimento" was sponsored by the Department of Culture. Correction was done by the "Grupo di Corector" an independent group of scholars who cooperate with the Department of Culture. The poems are about human feel-

ings in all kinds of situations.

At present, Mr. Croes is writing his second book, "Sentimento II" and he intends to publish both books - "Sentimento I y II" - before the end of the year. "Sentimento I" consists of 32 poems and "Sentimento II" of 34 poems.

Mr. Croes started writing poetry when he was employed at Lago Oil Refinery Company. Sadly, after the closure of the refinery in 1986, he lost all his pieces. But since 1977 he has been writing speeches during the Carnival season for different queens competing in the children, youth and grown-up categories, using passages of his poetry.

Mr. Croes also writes stories in Papiamentu for children of all ages. Among them are "E Tres Rumannan Basora," "Mo Fichi," "Kende ta Herry," and "E 10 bolitanan."

Dutch finmin Dijsselbloem announces candidacy for Eurogroup head

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem on Thursday announced his candidacy to become the next head of the Eurogroup of eurozone finance ministers.

"I want to tell you that... I will tomorrow present my official candidacy," during talks with the current head, Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, Dijsselbloem told parliament.

The finance minister, from the PvdA Labour party, has emerged in recent weeks as a frontrunner for the job of coordinating eurozone finance ministers, but had not officially announced his candidacy.

Dijsselbloem, 46, has barely two months of ministerial experience and little is known of his vision for the future of the 17-nation currency union.

Continued on pg 3



Combat Dengue

Keep around
your house
and yard clean

Dutch finmin Dijsselbloem ...

Continued from pg 2

He could nonetheless be named as head of the Eurogroup when it next meets, on Monday, although France still appeared reluctant to back his appointment.

"The importance of the Eurogroup as a platform for the European economy is so great," Dijsselbloem said.

"I ask for your trust in backing this candidacy," he said during a debate including on how he would combine his current ministerial job with that at the head of the Eurogroup.

Dijsselbloem's chances for the job had appeared to have faltered when French Finance Minister Pierre Moscovici told the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung website that the Dutchman had not yet adequately put forward his vision for the eurozone.

"How can one keep the eurozone together, how can we have better growth prospects, how can we develop banking union more?" said Moscovici, who had himself been tipped for the eurozone top job.

Moscovici later urged in Paris that the Eurogroup not rush into appointing a new chief at their next meeting, calling for the selection procedure to last "several weeks".

He said that "for good agreements within the Eurogroup, you need to have good agreement between the French and Germans."

Dijsselbloem is to outline his vision of the Eurogroup on Monday.

"It won't be a new vision for the eurozone but my views on the Eurogroup, it's functioning and its agenda," Dijsselbloem said.

"I will stress the importance of the Eurogroup. Obviously we must continue to develop the means to manage the crisis but also develop and expand European economic cooperation, strengthen the European economy."

Dijsselbloem stressed that his candidacy was also in the Netherlands' interests, which he would continue to defend in his new job.



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Eagle grounded in American Airlines makeover



WASHINGTON (AFP) - American Airlines, slowly climbing out of bankruptcy, unveiled a patriotic new look Thursday that all but grounds the stylized eagle that has graced its aircraft for decades.

The angular raptor set in silhouette between a double Helvetica A has been one of commercial aviation's most recognizable logos since it was created in 1967 by the Italian-born design supremo

Massimo Vignelli.

In its place, American -- whose corporate parent AMR filed for bankruptcy in November 2011 -- said it will enliven the empennages of its current and new aircraft with a bold rendition of the Stars and Stripes.

The peaked head of the eagle will remain, sort of, in a corporate logo to appear toward the front of the fuselage.

In a statement, American

said its makeover was prompted in part by the introduction of new Airbus and Boeing aircraft made from composite materials, which -- unlike older-generation metal aircraft -- must be thoroughly painted.

"Our new logo and livery are designed to reflect the passion for progress and the soaring spirit, which is uniquely American," said American's chief operating officer Virasb Vahidi.

American is taking delivery of about 60 new aircraft this year as AMR finalizes a restructuring plan amid talk of a merger with US Airways that would create the world's biggest airline in terms of scheduled passengers carried.

It also has 42 pending orders for the troubled Boeing 787 Dreamliner, grounded by US aviation authorities on Wednesday after a rash of safety incidents.



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Anniversaries are golden when you celebrate them in Aruba!



Judy and Julian Weinstein

Judy and Julian Weinstein of Jenkintown, PA first came to Aruba in 1976, recognizing immediately they had found a "home away from home" in the reliably sunny skies, pristine sugar sand beaches, and hospitable people.

They have made it a vacation destination annually ever since, eventually purchasing timesharing at Harbortown, now known as the Renaissance Beach Suites, when it was first breaking ground over 20 years ago. Their original two-week purchase eventually became 9 weeks; they spend six weeks of the winter months on Aruba and hold their other three, optimistically expecting their sons and their families to use them.

This year, for the first time, Judy and Julian are enjoying



The Weinstein clan loves Aruba

the company of all their family, because it is a very special occasion, their 50th wedding anniversary. Their sons Robert and Alan, with their wives Hope and Gail are here to celebrate, and for the first time, both of Robert's sons, Cole and Drew. It is one happy family for this golden landmark event.

The childhood sweethearts met on the boardwalk of Atlantic City when she was seventeen and he sixteen, both on vacation with their families from their Philadelphia suburbs. It was a love to last a lifetime, and Julian had to recruit Judy's mother, Lillian, to convince his parents that their marriage was meant to be.

"My parents refused to let us wed when I was seven-

teen, claiming I was too young," recalls Julian. At nineteen, he again pleaded his case, but his father again refused. "If you can find me someone who is convinced you are mature enough to marry, I will reconsider," he told the smitten young couple.

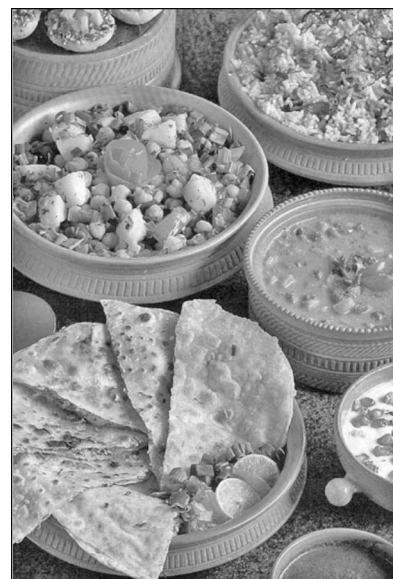
"I called Judy's mother, and had her speak to my dad," explains Julian. "She changed his mind, and we have been happily married ever since." Judy and Julian's love is the sort we all dream of, and even after 50 years, the couple still demonstrate that bond of love and affection effortlessly.

After purchasing additional timesharing at the Renaissance, Aruba became their traditional spot for celebrat-

ing their enduring love. This year, their golden anniversary, is extra special as they have all their family together for the first time, on the is-

land where they can clearly demonstrate for one and all how much they truly love each other and Aruba!

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ATA and Aruba Marriott host of Boston's TV show "Chronicle"



PALM BEACH, ARUBA (JANUARY 17, 2013) –In The Boston crew producer Stan Leven, anchor Anthony

Boston TV Crew Chronicle Bob Oliver, Stan Leven, Anthony Everett with Marriott GM Tom Calame

the week of January 13-18 2013, in cooperation with the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA), the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino host Boston's TV show "Chronicle", America's longest running local news channel. This year the "Chronicle" chose to feature Aruba in a 30-minute TV broadcast segment highlighting the destination and its signature activities and attractions. Airing nightly at 7:30 p.m. the ABC affiliate WCVB-TV, Chronicle covers travel, food, nightlife and more.

Everett and camera man Bob Oliver met with Marriott's General Manager Tom Calame during breakfast at La Vista's restaurant talking about the resort and developments of the island of Aruba followed by a tour of the resort. Together with ATA's representative Jonathan Boekhoudt the crew visited the best spots in Aruba, showcasing the beautiful island to the world.

The Aruba feature will broadcast in the month of February to the Boston viewers and online www.wcvb.com.



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Copa Airlines receives special recognition from AAA N.V.



Recently Copa Airlines received a special recognition from Aruba Airport Authority N.V (AAA). During a delightful night at Fusion

Lounge dedicated to all the airline partners, AAA proudly awarded Copa Airlines with this recognition.

The airport's Airline Marketing Department works hard all year long to maintain good communication and monitor the performance of the airline partners together with



the other partners in the industry. Through this good communication with the airlines and other partners, the airport's primary goals are achieved, which are to guarantee a continuity and quality in the service provided by the airlines flying to Aruba.

The Airline Marketing Department signalled the outstanding performance by Copa Airlines and its commitment to enhancement of service to Aruba and decided that this behaviour should be

awarded.

Ms. Lupe Carion, Station Manager of Copa Airlines proudly accepted the award on Copa Airlines' behalf and thanked Aruba Airport Authority for the recognition and reiterated Copa Airlines' commitment to the destination.

Mr. Peter Steinmetz, CEO of AAA together with Mr. Jurgen



Benschop, AAA's Director Operations and Ms. Jo-Anne Arends, Head Airline Marketing handed the award over to Ms. Lupe Carion.



President Obama meets new Somali president

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US President Barack Obama met Somalia's new President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on Thursday, as Washington recognized the African nation's government for the first time since 1991.

Obama dropped by a meeting between Mohamud and US Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough at the White House, before the Somali leader headed across town to see Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, a White House statement said.

"The president congratulated (Mohamud) on his election last September and the establishment of the first permanent, representative government in Somalia in two decades," the statement said.

"The president noted the impressive security and political gains over the past year

in Somalia.

"He acknowledged the many challenges facing Somalia but expressed optimism about Somalia's future," said the statement, accompanied by a photograph of the leaders meeting in the Roosevelt Room of the White House.

Somalia has not had an effective central government since 1991. But a new administration took office last year, ending eight years of transitional rule by a corruption-riddled government.

The US move turned the page on a dark chapter that in 1993 saw Americans anguished by scenes of US soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu by a mob after Somali militants shot down two Black Hawk helicopters. Eighteen Americans died and 80 were wounded.

Agony aunt Dear Abby dies at 94 - Obit



(FILES) Beloved advice columnist Pauline Phillips signs autographs in 2001.

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Pauline Phillips, who consoled millions around the world as the creator of the iconic Dear Abby advice column, has died at the age of 94, her syndication service said Thursday.

In a statement, Universal Uclick said Phillips -- who wrote Dear Abby from 1956 until her daughter Jeanne Phillips formally took over the column and her alias Abigail Van Buren in 2002 -- died Wednesday in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

She had fought "a long battle" with Alzheimer's disease, it said.

"I have lost my mother, my mentor and my best friend," Jeanne Phillips said in the statement.

"My mother leaves very big high heels to fill with a legacy of compassion, commitment and positive social change. I will honor her memory every day by contin-

uing this legacy."

Phillips, born Pauline Esther Friedman, was the twin sister of Esther Pauline Friedman, better known as the equally famous agony aunt Ann Landers. She died in 2002 after she was diagnosed with cancer.

Their hometown was Sioux Falls, Iowa and -- rather aptly for a pair who would be American pop culture icons -- their date of birth was the Fourth of July, 1918.

A happily married suburban housewife and mother of two teenagers, Phillips had never made a living by writing, but she reckoned she could bash out a regular column given how people had always gone to her with their woes.

During the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s, Phillips used Dear Abby to champion equal rights for women, minorities and those with mental illness and physical disabilities, Universal Uclick recalled.

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Alarm mounts over deadly Algerian hostage operation

ALGIERS (AFP) - Foreign governments voiced growing alarm Thursday over the safety of their citizens seized by Islamists at a gas plant in the Algerian desert, where a dramatic rescue operation left many hostages dead.

After a tense stand-off at the In Amenas plant that lasted all day and sent shockwaves across the world, Algerian troops ended their assault on the complex where hundreds of foreign and local workers were held, state media said.

Communication Minister Mohamed Said said "several people" were killed or wounded and a "large number" of hostages freed at the site, jointly operated by British oil giant BP, Norway's Statoil and state-run Algerian energy firm Sonatrach.

Earlier, the Al Qaeda-linked kidnappers claimed the army air and ground assault on the complex near the Libyan border had left 34 hostages dead.

Algeria's Interior Minister Dahou Ould Kablia said the attackers had come from Libya, citing intelligence reports.

World powers expressed outrage and dismay.

British Prime Minister David Cameron, who can-

celled a key speech to the European Union, citing the unfolding crisis, described a "very bad situation" at the compound, where a number of British citizens had been taken hostage.

"Already we know of one who has died. The Algerian armed forces have now attacked this compound. It is a very dangerous, very uncertain, a very fluid situation and I think we have to prepare ourselves for the possibility of bad news ahead," Cameron said.

French President Francois Hollande said he was receiving regular updates on the "terrible" situation, which was strongly condemned by Japan.

In Washington, White House spokesman Jay Carney said: "We are certainly concerned about reports of loss of life. And are seeking

clarity from the government of Algeria."

Islamists raided the site on Wednesday in an attack which left two dead in retaliation for a French offensive against Islamists in neighbouring Mali, demanding a halt to hostilities across the border.

Algerian media reports said nearly 600 Algerian workers and four foreigners -- two from Britain, one from France and one from Kenya -- were freed during the rescue operation. A total of 41 foreigners had been reported among the hostages.

Japan's Kyodo news agency reported that 14 Japanese hostages were still unaccounted for, citing engineering firm JGC.

The kidnappers told Mauritanian news agency ANI they would "kill all the hostages if the Algerian forces succeed in entering the complex."

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International News

FBI's Mueller travels to Libya amid Benghazi probe

WASHINGTON (AFP) - FBI director Robert Mueller traveled to Libya, his office said Thursday, as US investigators continue their probe there into last year's deadly attack on a US diplomatic mission.

"The director was in Libya to discuss cooperation on several issues," said an FBI official who spoke on condition of anonymity, without addressing whether Mueller, America's top cop, was investigating the September 11, 2012 attacks in Benghazi.

The officials would not reveal the exact timing for

Mueller's travel or what his itinerary is.

The FBI, the US national law enforcement agency, is investigating the attacks that killed US ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans when heavily-armed militants overran the diplomatic compound and a nearby annex.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is to appear before US lawmakers on January 23 to be quizzed about the deadly attacks, just days before she retires from her post as Washington's top diplomat.

Pilot of missing Missoni plane was authorised to fly

ROME (AFP) - Italy's air safety agency Ansv on Thursday corrected an earlier report which said the pilot of a small plane that disappeared off the coast of Venezuela with six people aboard, including the scion of Italy's Missoni fashion family, was unauthorised to fly.

Venezuelan authorities "have ascertained the validity of the medical fitness certificate at the moment of the crash," Ansv said, correcting its statement on Tuesday which had said Venezuelan pilot German Merchan's certificate had expired in November.

The certificate "is valid until May 30, 2013," the safety agency said.

The plane went missing on January 4 on a flight from the Los Roques islands to Caracas.

Flown by Merchan, 72, and a Venezuelan co-pilot, it was carrying Vittorio Missoni -- the son of the eponymous fashion label's founder Ottavio Missoni -- his wife Maurizia Castiglioni and another Italian couple.

The Italian embassy in Caracas earlier said the location where the plane went down had been identified, but as the ocean floor in the area reaches a depth of 2,000 metres, it was "too deep for many available instruments."

A specialised oceanographic ship from Louisiana has been deployed to help with the search.

A similar disappearance took place exactly five years ago, on January 4, 2008.

At the time, a plane carrying 14 people, including eight Italians, went missing in the same area as it flew from Caracas to Los Roques. No trace of the aircraft or its passengers was ever found.

All Boeing Dreamliners grounded due to fire risk

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Airlines grounded all Boeing 787 Dreamliners on Thursday until a fire risk is fixed, as the US aerospace giant reeled from the high-tech plane's deepening woes.

Authorities in Chile, Ethiopia, Europe, India, Japan and Qatar followed the lead of the US Federal Aviation Administration by halting all 787 flights after a Japanese Dreamliner was forced by a smoke alert to make an emergency landing on Wednesday.

The US Federal Aviation Administration, in grounding all US-registered 787 aircraft late Wednesday, highlighted "a potential battery fire risk in the 787" after a suspected leak emerged as the focus of inquiries into an All Nippon Airways emergency landing.

Last week, the FAA announced a comprehensive review of the 787 following a series of safety incidents.

Analysts said the ANA incident needed careful crisis management from Boeing, which made a big gamble with its next-generation plane.

The aircraft's flight systems rely heavily on electronics rather than the hydraulics used in older planes, and Boeing's use of lightweight composite

materials is another breakthrough for airlines anxious to cut fuel costs.

The global groundings came as Boeing reclaimed its title as the world's biggest planemaker from European rival Airbus.

Airbus chief executive Fabrice Bregier said he hoped the cutting-edge 787 would be back in the air soon.

All of the 50 Boeing Dreamliners in operation around the world have now been grounded, with Ethiopian Airlines the last to say its four planes would undergo precautionary inspections despite not having suffered the problems reported by other carriers.

Japan is home to 24 Dreamliners and the government in Tokyo said it was taking no chances pending an investigation into whether the lithium-ion battery on the ANA plane had overheated.

Lithium-ion batteries are also widely used in consumer electronics such as laptops and mobile phones.

Boeing shares fell by 3.4 percent on Wednesday, before the FAA announcement, and were trading 0.4 percent lower Thursday as analysts fretted over the impact of the crisis on its long-term prospects.

Floods swamp Indonesia capital, 19,000 homeless



JAKARTA (AFP) - Floods which have made more than 19,000 people homeless and killed three brought parts of the Indonesian capital to a standstill Thursday, with even the president forced to roll up his trousers. The waist-deep muddy waters paralysed much of the centre of Jakarta, home to 20 million people and already notorious for its chaotic traffic. Drivers were stuck in snaking queues for hours in the morning and cyclists pushed bikes with only the handlebars and seats visible. National disaster management agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said the death toll rose to three when a 35-year old man was electrocuted on Thursday. A two-year old boy was swept away and a 46-year-old man was electrocuted earlier this week.

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Health & Living

Measles deaths fall by over 70% in last decade: WHO

GENEVA (AFP) - The global number of measles deaths dropped by 71 percent between 2000 and 2011 largely thanks to a boost in vaccination efforts, the UN World Health Organisation said Thursday.

The number of mortalities from measles over that period fell from 542,000 to 158,000, it said in a statement, while the number of new cases fell by 58 percent to 355,000 in 2011.

The UN health agency recommends that all children receive two doses of measles vaccine to be protected from the highly contagious disease.

But despite high-profile vaccination campaigns, the vaccine has yet to reach all those in need. The WHO estimates that 20 million children worldwide failed to receive first dose of the vaccine in 2011.

More than half live in India (6.7 million children), Nigeria (1.7 million), Ethiopia (one million), and Pakistan (900,000) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (800,000).

In 2011, these five countries experienced large outbreaks of measles, while thousands of cases were also recorded in other countries including France, Italy and Spain.

Most of these countries have committed to eradicating measles by 2015 or 2020.



Combat Dengue

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Reasons to Wear Sunglasses



--They may be great fashion accessories but, more importantly, sunglasses are of extreme importance when it comes to maintaining good eye health.

-1 UV Protection - 2 Blue-Light Protection - 3 Comfortable vision - 4 Dark adaptation - 5 Skin Cancer (Cancer of the eyelids and skin around the eyes is more common than people think) *Tips for healthy eyes:* * Wear protective eyewear any time your eyes are exposed to UV light, even on cloudy days and during winter months. * Look for quality sunglasses that offer good protection. Sunglasses should block out 99 to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB radiation and screen out 75 to 90 percent of visible light. * Check to make sure your sunglass lenses are perfectly matched in color and free of distortions and imperfections. * Purchase gray-colored lenses. They reduce light intensity without altering the color of objects, providing the most natural color vision. * Don't forget protection for children and teenagers. They typically spend more time in the sun than adults.

Some migraines tied to women's heart risk: study

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Women who suffer from migraines accompanied by visual disturbances such as flashes of light may be at increased risk of heart attacks and blood clots, researchers said Tuesday.

The study involved 27,860 women, of whom 1,435 had migraine with aura, as such disturbances are called.

Over the course of the 15-year study, there were 1,030 cases of heart attack, stroke or death from a cardiovascular ailment, said the report from the American Academy of Neurology.

"After high blood pressure, migraine with aura was the second strongest single contributor to risk of heart attacks

and strokes," said study author Tobias Kurth. "It came ahead of diabetes, current smoking, obesity, and family history of early heart disease."

Kurth, or Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and the French National Institute of Health, is also a fellow of the American Academy of Neurology.

The risk for migraine-plagued women with aura was three times greater than for those with migraines that lacked this disturbance, Kurth told AFP.

A second study released by the same academy said women who had migraines with aura and took hormonal contraceptives were more likely to have blood clots.

Nike investigates Indonesian suppliers over wage abuse

JAKARTA (AFP) - US sporting goods giant Nike said it was investigating claims by labour activists that its manufacturers in Indonesia were trying to evade paying its workers the minimum wage.

Nike's code of conduct is "very clear", he said, adding the company expected workers producing for Nike to be "paid at least the minimum wage required by country law and provided legally mandated benefits", such as holidays, leave and severance pay.

Following massive protests, Jakarta workers won a 44 percent minimum wage rise to 2.2 million rupiah (\$228) a month, effective on January 1, and

other provincial governments are following suit at different rates.

After the EFJ visited the western Javanese city of Sukabumi, it reported a Nike supplier there had won approval from the district wage council to pay only 1.1 million rupiah, instead of the new minimum wage of 1.2 million rupiah.

Despite fears that wage increases will encourage businesses to move to neighbouring countries like Vietnam, Indonesian factory workers remain some of the lowest-paid in Asia, often earning less than workers in China or India.



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Sci-Tech

Facebook search taps into friends

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Facebook's new "graph search" feature is designed to take straight-forward questions and tap into users' circle of friends for answers.

Typing "friends San Francisco" in a graph search box atop a Facebook page prompts an all-to-easy hunt for those in a user's circle who have made it known that they live in the City by the Bay.

But the feature was intended to be more sophisticated. The query, for example, can be enhanced to seek "Indian restaurants liked by friends in San Francisco who are from India."

Such a prompt generates a results page showing Facebook friends who have indicated they are from India along with restaurants that they "liked" and the respective eateries's pages at the social network.

"We recently started asking people who check in at a place using Facebook to recommend it or rate it," Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg said while demonstrating the new

search feature.

"There are so many people on Facebook that you can get a very good signal very quickly."

Zuckerberg told of trying out a search of "friends who live in Palo Alto who like Game of Thrones" in order to decide who to invite to a viewing party for the opening of the latest season of the popular HBO cable program.

Along with showing which friends are fans of the show, it ranked the people according to how important they are in his life -- giving his sister high status.

The query also indicated what other shows friends liked, providing suggestions as to programs he might enjoy watching.

Users can also perform searches based on categories.

A query about music liked by Republicans came up with results that seemed to have only The Beatles in common with a search for tunes liked by self-proclaimed liberals at Facebook.

Wikipedia group launches online travel guide

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - The foundation behind crowd-sourced knowledge compendium Wikipedia launched a free online travel guide built collaboratively by volunteers from around the globe.

Wikimedia Foundation rolled out Wikivoyage.org as its popular online encyclopedia celebrated its 12th birthday and said that the travel guide was debuting with 50,000 articles in more than a half-dozen languages.

"There's a huge global demand for travel information, but very few sources are both comprehensive and non-commercial," Wikimedia Foundation executive director Sue Gardner said in a release. "That's about to change."

A Wikivoyage travel guide available online since 2006 and supported by a German non-profit association by the same name donated its content and brand to the new project, according to Wikimedia.

"The purpose of the Wikivoyage Association is to promote education and knowledge of all countries and regions in the world, as well as understanding among nations," said association board chairman Stefan Fussan.

Bolivia aims to export coca leaves: Morales



LA PAZ (AFP) - Having persuaded the United Nations to classify coca leaf chewing as legal, Bolivia will now focus on trying to export leaves on an industrial scale, President Evo Morales said Thursday.

China is interested in buying coca leaf to make tea, he told a news conference.

Chewing coca leaves is a centuries' old tradition in Bolivia. It has a mild stimulant effect, eases stomach pain and is used against altitude sickness in the Andes. The leaf is also the raw ingredient for cocaine.

Bolivia withdrew from the Vienna-based UN Convention on Narcotic Drugs last year in protest over the coca leaf's being labeled an illegal drug.

This month it was readmit-

ted after winning an opt-out allowing its population to keep chewing the leaves. Countries that objected included the United States, Britain, France and Germany.

Morales, who is also the leader of a coca-growers union, said Thursday "the next battle, of course, is going to be how to export coca leaves."

Bolivia will consult first with other countries allied with it in a regional organization called ALBA, Morales said.

He said Chinese diplomats in Bolivia have expressed interest in buying tons of coca leaves for making tea.

Bolivia is the Andean region's third largest producer of coca leaves, after Peru and Colombia.

This handout combination of three pictures released by the scientific magazine "Nature" shows the stem group entoproct *Cotyledion tylodes* fossil with U-shaped gut (A), interpretative drawing (B), and an artistic reconstruction in life (C). This weird marine creature that lived 500 million years ago at a time of explosive growth in Earth's biodiversity could be a forerunner of worms and molluscs, a study said. Palaeontologists in China and Europe have taken a second look at fossils of a species called *Cotyledion tylodes* -- a small animal that, when it was identified in 1999, was at first thought to be a cnidarian, or part of a group of jellyfish-like species.

The figure consists of three panels labeled A, B, and C. Panel A is a photograph of a fossilized specimen, showing a U-shaped gut structure. Panel B is a line drawing of the same specimen, with labels for 'Anus', 'Stomach', and 'Mouth'. Panel C is a color artistic reconstruction of the creature in life, showing a pinkish, segmented body with a long, thin tail-like structure. A 5mm scale bar is present in panel A.

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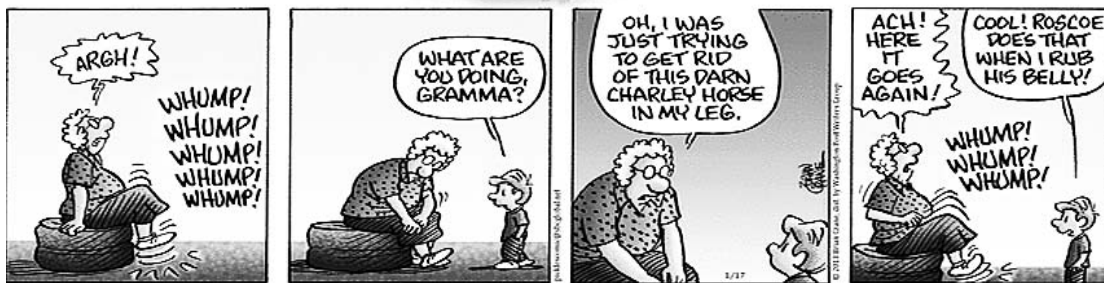
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PICKLES



MOMMA



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ACROSS

1. Ibsen heroine
5. Small gulls
9. PDQ
13. Arden and others
14. Smell ____ (be suspicious)
15. Bullring
16. Be elated
18. Actress White
19. Artful
20. Gourmet shop salad ingredient
21. Makes content
22. Road ____
23. Luxurious
25. Wheedle
28. Train for a fight
29. Certain railways
32. Adjoins
33. Lecherous

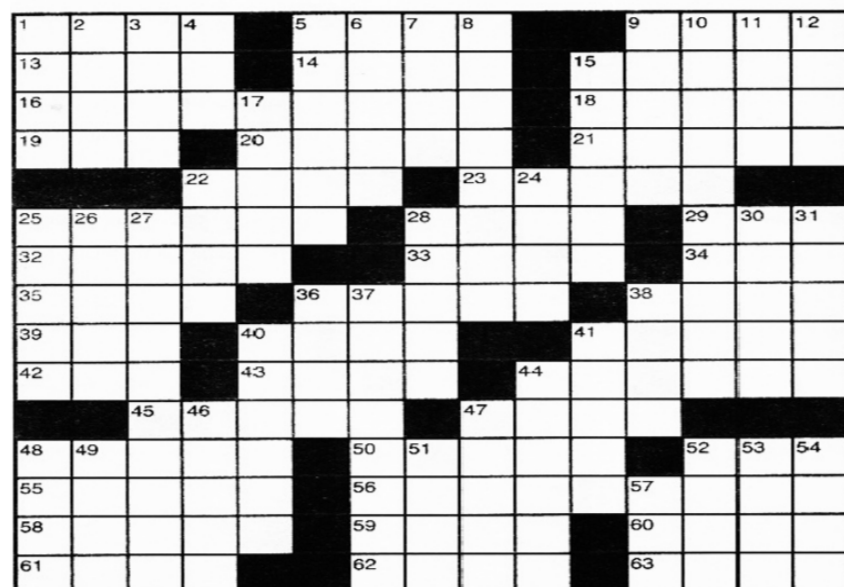
34. Gdansk's locale: abbr.
35. The Crimson Tide, for short
36. Oodles
38. Skin
39. It caused Cleopatra's demise
40. Jacket
41. Spiked the punch
42. Allow
43. Bobby of hockey and family
44. Ports in a storm
45. Author Bret
47. ____ de foie gras
48. Harsh
50. Distress signal

52. Anonymous party in a suit
55. U.S. coin minted from 1795-1934
56. "____ Sue" (1961 Dion hit)
58. Furniture worker
59. Coastal birds
60. Sinking-in phrase
61. Lawmakers: abbr.
62. Squeezes past
63. Scrawny

DOWN

1. "Meet the Press" fodder
2. Racing track
3. Be dependent
4. "Go ____ Alice"

5. Oversee
6. Remove evidence of
7. Stand by
8. Broke
9. Locales
10. Be a front-runner
11. Jackpot stake
12. Foots the bill
15. Ludicrous
17. Australian exports
22. Composer Nino
24. Hubert of jazz
25. Conspiracy
26. Degrade
27. Act rashly
28. Wooden strips
30. Star of "Pride and Passion"
31. Coasters
36. Organize
37. 1938 Astaire-Rogers film
38. Spread macadam
40. Monopolize
41. Hipster's "bye"
44. Annoy unrelentingly
46. Van Gogh's home
47. Type of velvet
48. Portions: abbr.
49. Anecdote
51. Lie in wait
52. Wile
53. SSS classification
54. Original garden
57. Grease



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POLICE HDQS
Telephone 100

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582-5447
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9			7				2	
		1	5					
3				8			6	
		4		2		6		8
			8		6			
2		6		9		1		
	9			4				7
					9	5		
	6				5			9

SOLUTION

6	8	8	5	1	2	9	7
9	7	5	6	4	2	1	8
1	1	2	8	7	9	6	5
5	5	1	4	6	7	9	2
2	4	7	9	5	8	6	1
8	6	9	2	1	7	5	4
1	9	4	7	8	6	5	2
7	8	6	2	5	1	4	9
5	2	1	9	4	8	7	6

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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Finance

Dutch high-tech group ASML reports profits dip in 2012

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Dutch company ASML which supplies computer chip-making systems and is a global high-tech bellwether, posted on Thursday a drop in sales and net profit for 2012, saying it expected a similar outlook for this year.

But despite profit dipping to 1.1 billion euros (\$1.52 billion), down 16.25 percent, and sales down 21.88 percent to 4.7 billion year-on-year, ASML said 2012 was "our second-best ever" after 2011.

"The 2012 fourth quarter and full year profit came in as expected," ASML chief executive Eric Meurice added in a statement, issued from the group's headquarters in Veldhoven in southern Netherlands.

Fourth quarter net profit totalled 298 million euros, some 4.5 percent higher than predicted by analysts polled by Dow Jones Newswires, boosted by lower than expected provisions in tax benefit audits.

Meurice said the drop in figures was mainly due to lower sales in the computer memory market, which "never really picked up because the personal computer business shrunk," compared to 2011.

He added the manufacturer expected net sales for 2013 to be "at a similar level to 2012,

with a slow start in the first quarter, recovery in the second and "relatively large" second half sales.

Net sales of about 850 million euros are expected in the first quarter, he said.

ASML last year announced it was taking over Cymer, a US-based lithography systems component maker in a 1.95-billion-euro-deal.

US and German anti-trust authorities have given the deal the go-ahead with ASML expecting it to be closed by the first half of 2013.

ASML said it planned to give cash back to its shareholders through increased dividends and share buy-back programmes, aiming to boost the dividend this year by 15 percent.

"For regulatory reasons, ASML will not announce any new share buy-back programme before Cymer's extraordinary general meeting to be held on February 5," it said.

ASML operates in 16 countries and is considered an accurate indicator of conditions in the microprocessing industry. It manufactures machines used to make integrated circuits and semiconductors and has 8,000 full-time employees.

IMF to meet on Argentina problem on Feb. 1

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Directors of the International Monetary Fund will meet on February 1 to decide if and how to punish Argentina for not supplying accurate economic data, IMF chief Christine Lagarde said Thursday.

But she also said that the IMF currently has a team of experts inside Argentina to prepare a review of the country's financial sector, suggesting the two sides continue to work together despite the data spat.

In September, Lagarde warned that Argentina could be censured with a "red card" after nearly two years of pressing Buenos Aires to abide by IMF rules and provide accurate data on economic growth and inflation.

In December the executive board received a formal report on Argentina's non-compliance with the Fund's data rules, but the report's recommendations have not been divulged.

Economists suspect Argentina has long supplied false data on its economy. In 2011, for example, Buenos Aires announced national inflation stood at 9.5 percent, but private analysts estimated it was actually more than double that figure -- at 23 percent.

The stand-off has worsened relations between Argentina and the IMF, already at odds over the country's financial crisis a decade ago.

Daily Exchange Rates				
Current as of:	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
01/17/2013				
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.82
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.90
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	192.55
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	240.45
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	28.09
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	32.46
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	32.71
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	201.55
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Panama duty free port hit by protests

PANAMA CITY (AFP) - Hundreds of people blocked the main access road to the duty free port of Colon Thursday in a protest to demand greater public investment in the region.

Protesters burned tires in the road and intermittently halted the flow of traffic into the Caribbean port city, 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of Panama City.

Riot police were positioned at various points in the province, but did not intervene.

An umbrella group of labor, business and civic organizations are demanding that the government invest \$500 million and part of the tax revenue

generated by the province to deal with social problems in Colon.

Colon is one of Panama's poorest provinces, despite its duty free zone, port facilities and a section of the Panama canal that account for about a quarter of the country's GDP.

The government of President Ricardo Martinelli has offered to fund projects in the amount of \$173 million.

The free port, a walled off 2.4 square kilometers (square mile) area located near the Caribbean entrance to the Panama Canal, is the largest of its kind in the western hemisphere.

Commerzbank looking to cut 6,000 jobs

BERLIN (AFP) - Commerzbank, Germany's second-biggest bank, will likely propose next month cutting as many as 6,000 jobs, some 18 percent of the workforce, the Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday, citing sources.

Different sources told the business daily the cuts could range from 5,000 to 6,000 workers, but the bank declined to comment on numbers.

Talk of massive job cuts surfaced in November, before the bank announced a major effort to cut costs and focus on

core and profitable sectors.

Commerzbank chief executive Martin Blessing said at the time it was clear that deep cuts in personnel costs would be inevitable, but declined to specify how much in savings would be made or how many jobs would be cut.

The bank returned to profit in the third quarter of 2012, booking a net profit of 78 million euros compared with a loss of 687 million euros in July through September 2011.

The result fell short of analysts' expectations, however.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

OSHA GAUGE AFAR
AHOT ERROR NOLA
FORTYNINER GRIN
SONNETS SALUTED
ARE NOSY
DRESSY ACTS WAG
REFIT ADULT IMA
OFFS ARABY ONIT
PRO IMAGE ANKLE
SYR PELE MISSED
THUR SOD
GELATIN ORESTES
AVER COMFORTING
LIST ALIAS UNIT
ELSE NOISE DAOS



DALLAS (AFP) - American Airlines unveils a new company logo and exterior paint scheme on a Boeing 737-800 aircraft on January 17, 2013 in Dallas, Texas. The exterior changes are the first for the company since 1968 and were announced as the parent company of American Airlines, AMR, is considering a merger with US Airways.

Brickell Bay Sand Beach lounge featuring live music this Sunday



--Aruba's newest lounge, Brickell Bay Sand Beach, in Palm Beach, created quite a stir with its recent opening, revealing a chic, unique environment that has strongly attracted island fashionistas as a relaxed, elegant place to



while away the evening hours.

The new eatery/nightclub has live music twice weekly, and this Sunday will feature one of the island's most popular and dynamic entertainers of the last decade, Marisela and the Aquarius Band. She is back on Aruba for a limited engagement and will be appearing every Sun-

day through January at Brickell Bay Sand Beach Lounge.

Marisela will be heating up Palm Beach for a very cool night each weekend beginning this Sunday, January 6, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM. This is a performer known for "bringing down the house," so don't miss this rare opportunity to enjoy some great entertainment and discover Aruba's most stylish new nightspot.



Every Wednesday, The Ryders will be rockin' the house from 9:00 PM until midnight. Enjoy two for one drinks on all brands, even premium, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM every Monday through Thursday, and from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on Friday and Saturday, with an additional late night "Happy

Hour" on the weekends from 10:00 to 11:00 PM.

Brickell Bay Sand Beach lounge is located directly across the street from the South Beach Center. If you are wondering what is new and hip on Aruba, this is it!

ATSA toast to past accomplishments and future goals



ATSA President Jan van Nes with guests



- A congenial meeting of the minds was shared over drinks and dinner by Aruba Time-Share Association (ATSA) members, who celebrated collaborative efforts in 2012, with toasts to continued cooperation in 2013. The recent rainy weather did not dampen spirits with a delicious dinner originally planned at Passions by Amsterdam Manor, quickly relocated to Tulip restaurant at MVC Eagle Beach Aruba.

During the event, current ATSA President Jan van Nes

expressed that 2012 had been a challenging year, but that the association looks forward to 2013, with ATSA further expanding its goals in remaining an active participant in the island's tourism industry.

In 2012, ATSA was represented at the American Resort Development Association (ARDA) conference as a proponent of providing dedicated attention to tourism product as well as infrastructure as an essential part of ensuring the vacation experience. ATSA also continues to work suc-

cessfully with exchange companies, such as Interval International and RCI, with Aruba remaining a highly-desired destination among timeshare owners. Local efforts have encompassed a full spectrum of activities, including continued collaborations with the Government through the Tourism Product Enhancement Fund (TPEF).

A well-deserved, year-end celebration was enhanced by an outstanding four-course dinner, with matching wines, presented by Chef Stanwick Bloem, whose artistry with cuisine can be enjoyed on a regular basis at Passions Restaurant at Amsterdam Manor. Along with ATSA members, Aruba Experience Director Susan Ruiter, who oversees the publication of the personalized in-house magazines featured at Aruba's timeshares, also shared in the recent, celebratory event.

Aruba boasts approximately 4,000 timeshare units that serve to guarantee year-round, high occupancies by Aruba's most loyal visitors. ATSA members include Marriott's Aruba Surf Club, Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club, Casa del Mar, Costa Linda Beach Resort, Aruba Beach Club, La Quinta, Paradise Beach Villas, Caribbean Palm Village, Amsterdam Manor, La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino, Divi Aruba Phoenix, Divi Dutch Village and Divi Links, Tropicana, Occidental and Playa Linda Beach Resort as well as De Palm Tours.



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5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an inter-

nationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy,

made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at 7 a.m., patrons can now order 2 eggs any style, (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) toast and coffee with unlimited refills for the special introductory price of only \$4.49, (\$5.48, with bacon) or All-you-can-eat pancakes, for \$6.99, again, with free refills on fresh coffee. Breakfast is served until 11 a.m. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on; after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie; so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda,



Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with Aarons' secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of

fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish at night; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district at now extra cost for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by



the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community

of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facili-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the

least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

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Football: Juve lead under threat from Napoli, Lazio

MILAN (AFP) - Juventus's lead at the top of Serie A could come under threat Saturday when they are expected to be without three key midfielders, including Andrea Pirlo, when they host in-form Udinese.

The champions, on 45 points, have a three-point lead over Napoli, who moved back into second place in unexpected fashion Thursday, when the Italian federation (FIGC) overturned a two-point deduction for suspected match-fixing.

Lazio drop to third, equal on points, while Inter Milan are fourth on 38.

However Juve's hopes of keeping the chasing pack at bay could be dealt a blow even before Udinese, whose striker Antonio Di Natale has recently taken his league tally to an impressive 14 goals, visit Turin on Saturday.

Italy international Pirlo (calf) and Chilean winger Arturo Vidal (ankle) added to coach Antonio Conte's woes when they missed training on Thursday.

Whether Udinese can maintain a purple patch of form which has seen them climb to eighth remains to be seen, especially as the north-eastern side lost number one 'keeper Zeljko Brkic last week for a month due to a fractured finger, meaning Daniele Padelli steps into the breach.

Should Juve lose, Napoli and Lazio could both pull level on points if they win.

Vladimir Petkovic's Lazio are unbeaten in their last 13 games but travel to Palermo, who sit second from bottom on only 15 points, possibly missing top striker Miroslav Klose.

The German veteran is reported to be suffering from a left thigh problem, leading to media speculation he could be spared the trip with a view to possibly recovering for next week's Italian Cup semi-final first leg against Juventus.

Having begun the week in second place, Lazio dropped to third, through no fault of their own, as Napoli were elevated to second by the FIGC decision.

Napoli, however, face a tricky away trip to Fiorentina, who have failed to win their last three games including a 1-0 defeat to Roma in the Italian Cup quarter-final in midweek.

Vincenzo Montella's side, who sit fifth, 10 points off the pace, should be fighting to get back to winning ways but Napoli have won their last three outings including last week's 3-0 rout of Palermo when striker Edinson Cavani scored a hat-trick.

AC Milan, meanwhile, will look for home advantage to count when they host Bologna, hoping to leapfrog Roma into sixth.

Roma, however, will also have home advantage when they host Inter Milan at what should be a near full house at the Olympic Stadium in Sunday's late match.

Fixtures (all times GMT)
Saturday
 Palermo v Lazio (1600), Juventus v Udinese (1845)
Sunday
 Fiorentina v Napoli (1030), Atalanta v Cagliari, Chievo v Parma, Genoa v Catania, Milan v Bologna, Pescara v Torino, Siena v Sampdoria (all 1300), Roma v Inter (1845)

Tennis: Nadal brings comeback forward to Chile event

SANTIAGO (AFP) - Rafael Nadal, out of action since the middle of last season because of injury, will now make his return at next month's ATP claycourt event in Vina del Mar, Chile, a week earlier than expected, he revealed on Thursday.

Nadal's camp had announced on Tuesday that the Spaniard would make his long-awaited comeback at the Brazil Open in Sao Paulo, scheduled February 11-17.

But the seven-times French Open champion said Thursday he would in fact return to action in Chile on February 4.

"I am pleased to confirm my participation at the Vina del Mar tournament in Chile," Nadal posted on his Facebook page.

"I would like to thank the tournament organisers for the invitation and to say that I have many fans in (Chile), I can finally meet them in person and play my first tournament since my injury which has kept me out for so long," he added.

Spanish tennis federation doctor Angel Ruiz-Cotorro said on Wednesday that Nadal was in the final stages of his

recovery and that his comeback plans were proceeding according to plan.

The Vina del Mar tournament organisers confirmed Nadal's participation in the coastal city tournament.

"Now completely recovered, he is looking to playing on his favourite surface to add games, rhythm and confidence, on the South American part of the tour, which begins with the VTR Open ATP Chile," it read.

The Vina del Mar event, situated 120 kilometres west of the Chilean capital city Santi-

ago, runs from February 4-10 and will also feature Juan Monaco, Carlos Berlocq, Pablo Andujar, Albert Ramos and Santiago Giraldo.

Nadal, currently ranked four in the world, has won 11 Grand Slam titles but injuries have dogged him and the 26-year-old Spaniard hasn't played since June, missing the Olympics, US Open and the Davis Cup final.

He also had to skip the ongoing Australian Open because of a stomach virus while a succession of knee injuries have plagued his career.



SAN JUAN (AFP): Ecuadorian forward Jose Cevallos (2nd-L) celebrates with teammates after scoring the team's second goal against Peru during their South American U-20 Championship Group B football match, at Bicentenario stadium in San Juan, Argentina, on January 16, 2013. Four South American teams will qualify for the FIFA U-20 World Cup Turkey 2013. Ecuador won by 2-1.



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NBA: Lakers' Gasol hopes to return against Heat



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Lakers forward Pau Gasol, sidelined for five games because

of a concussion, hopes to return to action on Thursday when Los Angeles host reigning NBA champions the Miami Heat.

"I feel better -- a lot better, actually," Spain's Gasol said after training on Wednesday. "I feel 100 percent now. Got a good workout in today and everything felt good. Tomorrow will be a go."

Gasol must still be cleared to return by doctors, and he admitted that the head injury was difficult to deal with.

"The struggling of getting up every day and not getting better, constant headaches,

being bothered by light or noise and not knowing what the next day will be like or not knowing when you'll be healthy," he said of the difficulties posed by the injury.

"You do a little research about concussions and it's an unfortunate hit, but those can happen any day or any game. If you get concussed the second time, it's a lot more dangerous."

Gasol's injury was yet another blow for a Lakers team that has floundered this season.

Thursday's match-up against Miami was once billed as a possible NBA finals preview, but the Lakers go into the contest languishing in 11th place in the Western Conference and well behind in the race for one of eight playoff spots.

After a six-game losing streak -- their worst in six years -- the Lakers have put together two straight victories. Having center Dwight Howard back from a shoulder injury helped their cause.

In wins over Cleveland and Milwaukee, Howard averaged 26.5 points and 15 rebounds.

NBA: 'King' James youngest to reach 20,000 points



OAKLAND (AFP) - LeBron James became the youngest player in NBA history to score 20,000 career points on Wednesday, moving past the milestone with 25 points in Miami's 92-75 victory over Golden State.

James's jump shot with 2:45 remaining in the second quarter gave him 20,001 career points. He came into the contest needing 18 points to become the 38th player in NBA history to reach the mark.

"It means everything," James said. "It means I'm healthy, I'm able to be out there on the floor and also my team-mates have allowed me to get to this milestone."

The previous youngest to reach the 20,000-point mark was Lakers star Kobe Bryant, who got there when he was 29 years, 122 days old, while James was 28 years and 17 days old.

James reached the 20,000-point plateau in his 726th regular-season game. While he was the youngest to get there, Wilt Chamberlain needed just 499 games to reach the milestone.

In the first quarter James's pass to a driving Dwyane Wade for a dunk also gave him a 5,000th career assist, a mark he said he was equally proud of.

"Twenty-thousand points is big-time," James said. "I know

the list is small and I'm humbled by it, but also 5,000 assists means a lot as well because I've had some good team-mates over the years and I appreciate every single one of them."

James became the 13th player with 20,000 points and 5,000 assists.

Even better for James, the Heat won easily. Dwyane Wade contributed 15 points, eight rebounds and six assists for Miami, who have won two of their last three.

Mario Chalmers added 15 points, Chris Bosh scored 11 and Ray Allen scored 10 for the Heat, who rested their starters for the bulk of the fourth quarter and still maintained a double-digit lead.




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FLAMBALA, Argentina (AFP) - US Robby Gordon steers his Hummer during the Stage 12 of the 2013 Dakar Rally between Fiambala in Argentina and Copiapo in Chile, on January 17, 2013. The rally is taking place in Peru, Argentina and Chile from January 5 to 20.

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Armstrong loses Olympic medal



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Lance Armstrong was stripped of his 2000 Olympic bronze medal hours before the airing Thursday of his eagerly-awaited tell-all interview with US talkshow queen Oprah Winfrey.

Fans and critics of the disgraced cycling icon were waiting to hear the breadth of his doping admission and the depth of his contrition, as another honor was stripped from his sullied list of achievements.

The shamed US rider's first interview since he was stripped last year of his record seven Tour de France titles was recorded in Austin, Texas, on Monday was aired in two

segments on yesterday and tonight.

In it, talkshow host Winfrey, known for her empathetic celebrity interviews, said the 41-year-old admitted taking illegal substances and provided answers "that all people around the world have been waiting to hear."

But, as speculation swirled about whether he had implicated others -- notably members of the sport's world governing body, amid allegations of complicity and cover-up -- he was stripped of his 2000 Olympic bronze medal.

The International Olympic Committee said they had asked Armstrong to return the time-trial medal after a three-

week time-limit elapsed for him to appeal against the sanctions imposed by the International Cycling Union (ICU).

Abraham Olano of Spain, who was fourth, may be set to inherit the bronze in a race won by Armstrong's ex-US Post Service team-mate Viacheslav Ekimov and which saw Jan Ullrich of Germany take silver.

Ekimov is now general manager of the Katusha cycling team that were dropped from the elite ProTeam list for this season because of their ambivalent stance on doping. Ullrich eventually served a two-year ban for doping.

Armstrong's admission, after years of aggressive denials, is an astonishing reversal and has stunned the sport as much as the devastating report last August that lifted the lid on his activities and saw him banned for life.

"No one could have imagined only a few weeks ago that Lance Armstrong would make his confession publicly, that he would confess in public to having been doped," Tour de France director Christian Prudhomme told reporters in Paris.

"It's obviously something very important but I can't say

more than that, I don't know more than you. I don't know what he'll say. For us, Lance Armstrong is already in the past."

Just as word of Armstrong's admission leaked on Monday, snippets of information have trickled out on the eve of the telecast.

The New York Times reported that Armstrong "teared up and cried" during the interview, which Winfrey has characterized as "intense", although the newspaper's source did not say what caused Armstrong to lose his composure.

The New York Daily News cited an anonymous source as saying Armstrong "does not seem sorry" about his choice to use banned drugs, while the Washington Post said Armstrong challenges the USADA's portrayal of him as vindictive.

Winfrey said that she felt Armstrong was "thoughtful" and "serious" in his approach but added she would leave it up to viewers to judge whether he was remorseful.

"I would rather people make their own decisions about whether he was contrite or not," she told CBS television on Tuesday.

Armstrong's confession is likely to give fresh ammunition to critics of the embattled UCI, amid lingering questions about how doping by Armstrong and in the peloton went undetected for so long.

The UCI, under fire for refusing an amnesty for doped riders, has refrained from any self-criticism in response to the scandal, while its creation of an independent commission to look at its role has been branded weak.

The stakes are also high for Armstrong, who was dropped by high-profile sponsors and stepped down from the cancer support charity that he founded in the wake of the revelations.

Some have seen the belated confession as an attempt to restore his tarnished image and faith in the integrity of professional cycling after its doping-scarred past.

But he also opens himself up to potential litigation and the possible loss of millions of dollars or even criminal charges by admitting that he lied about taking performance-enhancing drugs.

More of this interview in tomorrow's paper.



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